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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

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CHILDREN'S SELF-ORGANIZED WORK AND THE EDUCATION OF LEADERSHIP IN THE SCHOOLS

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To the earnest parent and teacher of the present day two conflicting ideals must always present themselves. On the one hand, to be properly educated a child must be prepared for the life which he is to lead when he becomes an adult. Society provides skilled teachers and material equipment in order to protect itself. The way in which people act and feel and think in adult society, as it exists at present, is thus to be taken as an example and imitated. Presumably typical human beings meet together in school boards and decide upon the manner in which the child shall be made in their image. The teacher is delegated to carry out their wishes. Since the ways by which the various members of the school board, or those whom they represent, themselves succeeded are quite various, one will insist upon one way of education, another upon a second and different way. Two tendencies arise: one, to compromise by introducing a little of all the different subjects anyone has found to be of value, and thus crowd the program and dissipate the attention of the child; another, to compromise by cutting off all differences and leaving a devitalized residue common to all. It is manifest that the ideal which confines itself to the imitation of individuals of the present or even past generation is confronted by serious practical difficulties, and it is in the main these difficulties from which the future is bound to suffer.

This situation I might illustrate by an Indian story. Once upon a time a council of all the animals was called to decide as to how they might ask Nanebosho to create the new generation of animals so that they would all be better able to cope with the difficulties which pressed upon their fathers and mothers. The bear spoke first and dwelt particularly upon size, a flat foot, and a sensitive nose. He thought a tail was quite unnecessary. The fox politely pointed out that, unless one slept through the winter in a hollow tree, a tail made an excellent wrap with which to cover the feet. The beaver thought the fox was moving in the right direction, although he hadn't gone quite far enough, and suggested that by a proper use of mud (the details of which he could find in Mr. Long's books) there was yet hope that he might have his children or even himself provided with flat club-like appendages, much more useful and more beautiful than anything he had dreamed of. After all the animals, and even the birds, had spoken, they began to quarrel, as they could see no common ground upon which they could appeal to Nanebosho. The sly fellow, however, had been listening to this dispute all the time, and now appeared with an entirely new animal which he had made out of a little mud from the river bottom. It was a comical but harmless creature. Every point which any animal had objected to was omitted in its make-up. It had no feet, no tail, no eyes, no hair, but did have a sharp voice and an enormous stomach. All the animals began to laugh, when suddenly a second creature which Nanebosho had made suddenly appeared upon the scene. This was as terrible as the other was comical. It had every kind of tail, claw, wing, and tooth that anyone had ever seen. The animals were so frightened that each began to run in a different direction, and the council was completely broken up. No one was left but Nanebosho, who laughed heartily as he took his two new creations and drowned them in the river.

Opposed to the ideals founded narrowly on the imitation of present or past members of society are those who use all individuals and present society itself merely as guide-posts to the much larger ideal of growth. It is not a fact that society is already grown, and that its present institutions and its present

individuals are safe models for implicit imitation. Society is in process of growth, and it is particularly from the young that we may gather the direction of this growth. We must learn to read the new impulses which arise, and to estimate their viability in other terms than those of the present and the past. The child is a social embryo, and ought to be more than what he can imitate. He is protected, as is the physical embryo, from the destructive stimulation of a too complex environment, so that inner forces can operate more freely. He is being created, not molded. The home and the school are the amniotic membranes and the womb by which he is nourished and within which he lives. It is not the infringement of society upon the child, it is the push of the child upon society, which measures his growth. Fortunately, the physical embryo is concealed from our eyes, and there is nothing to do but wait. The spiritual and social embryo, on the contrary, is in direct relationship to all our mental and moral powers, and grows by means of them be these consciously or unconsciously applied. When we rise to conscious education, it would be well if we did not contradict what has already been done unconsciously, and press upon the child from without the products of our adult egoism. French experimenters find that when an egg is varnished in certain patterns, chicks of various kinds of monstrosity are hatched. To quit varnishing the egg, to prevent hindrances—these are the mottoes of the educator: to give such protection and provide such means that the child is able to react favorably upon his present environment; and then to wait.

To apply such maxims sanely it is necessary to take both sides of them. If the protection and the means are not provided, it is idle to expect a favorable reaction. It is also highly important that there be no mistake about what is a favorable reaction. Who shall judge about the reaction? Shall it be the child, or shall it be the teacher? To leave it exclusively to either would presuppose both a lack of love and a lack of reason. Love and reason both act, like all evolutionary processes, by a series of sketches or approximations. Tolerance of what is not quite understood is essential in such a process. "It doth not yet appear what we

shall be." But when the hearts and hopes of both child and teacher are in the future looming large, but not yet realized, there we have the conditions which make such tolerance necessary. Unlike the mothers whom Solomon judged, neither will wish the offspring divided. To give the child a future near enough to be laid hold of, and to quit feeding him with the husks of the already determined part or of what he will be expected to do when a man as seen by the teacher, which is the part once again, these are essential conditions of his growth. If this is done, the problem of who shall judge the reaction is already solved.

To find futures for the child is the teacher's mission. Many of these are, however, already in the child himself. All of those capable of present real activity are to be found there, and of many of them he is already conscious. Why, then, should the teacher hunt for all possible kinds of future needs, and neglect the needs and aims which the child is actually feeling at the present? On the contrary, the proper satisfaction of those near at hand will lead most naturally to those that are farther off. And, without finding out how he can satisfy present ideal needs, how will the habit of exerting himself to satisfy these future needs ever arise? We must exercise such habits as will later on be used. If, then, submission to those over him, and dulness to the conduct and movement of the rest of society, even if this should be beneficial, are wanted, the teacher may safely be continuously authoritative. If, however, the power to create society is wanted, experience in doing this thing either as leader or as voluntary follower is necessary to the result.

Where can the opportunity for such an experience be found? It is, no doubt, already begun in the instinctive play of children, especially where the members of two or three families come together in a neighborhood. Here clubs, either called by such a name or merely virtual, are often formed which succeed in carrying out various schemes. The elders are often interested in these, and thus get an opportunity not so much "to divert" as to yield up to the young some of their stored experiences in the art of life. These activities, however, have upon them for the most part the ban of civilization. Like the innocent lives of primitive people,

they must hide in obscurity. Pick up what time can be squeezed out between the serious demands of the school and the home, and finally suffer from the stigma in the mind of the elders, and in the higher consciousness of the child himself, of being merely play.

If such experiences are to be dealt with effectually so as to yield a reasonable revenue of educational value, the child's institution, the school, must take hold of them. The teacher must see in them an opportunity, and the highest opportunity, for her sacred office. She must learn to put out at interest, to willing borrowers, those sums of social heredity with which a rich and scholarly culture has put her into contact. She must learn also to refrain from pressing upon her customers wealth which they seem to consume, but do not use. To permit such waste is to produce a nation of educational paupers.

The attack upon such problems can doubtless be made in many ways, and the whole of the new education is a history of more or less indirect and flanking movements toward such an end. Nor will these indirect approaches ever be superseded. A portion of the work of any school must always be "directed," or even controlled and compelled, by the teacher. A good education ought to give intellectual insight and habitual response to both these sides of a well-rounded character. The individual ought to be able to submit willingly and intelligently to authority, even authority which he has not constituted. But he ought also to be able to use authority, even absolute authority, with true wisdom and success. In every walk in life an individual gets some opportunity for each of these attitudes; opportunity, however, in which his education has too frequently not fitted him to succeed.

Of these opposite poles, the power to organize, to use resources, to place purposefully and to execute, with no further compulsion than the natural failure of places if they should prove unsuccessful, has seemed to the present writer to be the most neglected in the schools. Some five years ago an attempt was made in the Chicago Normal School, and afterward carried out in Colorado, Wisconsin, and Boston, not so much to carry out preconceived ideas, as to give a chance for the development of some of the plans and ideas that children already possessed, and

to adopt an attitude toward them on the part of the teacher of help and subordination, to study them and bring to their aid such material and spiritual resources as they themselves cared to use. From one standpoint this was an attempt to afford an opportunity in the schools for natural child-study, although going beyond the mere examination of individual details and their consequent scientific combination by the investigator. In order to carry out such a notion, the teachers needed to divest themselves of most of their presuppositions as teachers. On the other hand, it was quite fatal for them to fall into the attitude which is often supposed to be that of the scientific investigator, who, after having arranged the conditions, folds his arms and looks on. At every moment, on the contrary, the teacher must realize that she cannot divest herself of actual participation, but it must be, within the limits prescribed, that kind of participation in which she is authoritatively a follower and not a leader. Her position is that of one of the nourishing membranes of a social embryo.

Since, however, the school begins in authority, the first thing is to find a point of connection for the new departure. In the actual conditions this resolved itself into a division of time upon the school program. A clear demarkation on the program was thought to be the most practical for many reasons. It reduced the difficulties to a minimum. The smallest working time—half an hour two or three times a week—was offered to such children as preferred to have plans which they reasonably believed they could carry out either in the school, the school-yard, or the surroundings. This was a condition which depended upon natural social selections and challenged responsibility. At the beginning the teacher is in a position to move tentatively and accept only those plans which appear quite reasonable and likely to succeed. As their common experience widens her knowledge of the children's possibilities, and also strengthens their own power of overcoming difficulties, her indorsement may be given with an increasing degree of confidence. It may be that at first there is only one group, or perhaps even one child, who can be allowed to carry out self-organized plans. This, however, is not without its effect upon the other children who are meanwhile pursuing work wholly

directed by the teacher, especially if the teacher has permitted such activities as have a stimulating social effect. Our experience for five years has been that very soon there is no dearth of plans, and the teacher will be rather crowded with the labor involved in the estimation of the plans which are presented to her. Here the children should be asked to participate in proposing ways by which the preliminary consultations with the teacher can be facilitated. They often propose or freely agree to reduce them to writing and making them more definite, so that long conversations become less necessary. Part of this work is furthered by previous discussions on the part of the children before they approach the teacher.

I have here been supposing cases where the idea of such a work has been clearly, practically, and sometimes enthusiastically grasped by the children. A high degree of such an attitude cannot be expected at first, no matter how many words are used. Actual experience is the only effective teacher, and such work, if real, will grow, like a snow-ball, from very small beginnings. As the work grows, the advantage of a measured time upon the program will begin to make itself felt. It will soon be seen, and the idea may be expressed at first either by teacher or by pupils, that it would be better if there was more time given to this work. Do not let the teacher be either too eager or too stiff in adopting this idea. This is really a plan involving all the other plans. Only when the class as a whole, or at least a working majority, can satisfy the teacher that such work can hold itself together, and perhaps really overcome the difficulties involved with greater success by such a change, is she justified in giving her consent. The children must feel that this is a judgment for which they must themselves produce a reasonable probability.

Such a method of advance in extending the time on the program gives an objective measure of the work, and thus attains a certain degree of scientific precision. To what extent the time might be successfully extended could in the beginning of their experiences not be known for any of the various grades, any more than could the inventor of the thermometer know to what extent the mercury would rise when placed in boiling water. After five

years of such work in various grades, a measure has not yet been obtained for all, but a reasonable degree of probability has, I believe, been reached in the case of children about nine years old. In five different classrooms of about this average age the children continued to press upon the program up to about one period of three quarters of an hour a day. Beyond this they never cared to go. The psychic powers involved in such work seemed exercised and contented. The children's imaginations seemed satisfied, and their executive resources exhausted. Outside of that time they appeared to be more willing than previously to be carried by the teacher. Their attitude seemed a little like that of a child who is learning to walk; a short period of an upright position is all that he craves for or can use advantageously. Professor Dewey's criticism that, if a self-active spirit is good at one period of the day and for some of the work, it is good for all periods, and ought to be introduced in such a way that the whole work is equally permeated with it, does not seem, in view of the actual constitution of the school, or in view of the best possibilities of the growth of self-activity itself, to be either practical or ideal.

It is, however, not to be supposed that, although in the more directed portions of the program the children submit more readily to authority, they do this because they are not appreciative of the meaning of freedom. On the contrary, they understand it better. They have been behind the scenes and have found out by their very failures that authority is necessary to the carrying out of any free conception. They have a greater respect for it, and consequently sympathize, in the sense of acquiescing, more profoundly with the teacher's efforts. The teacher, too, comes to find in proportion as she meets with a willing response that her authority needs not to be so strenuous or backed up by compulsion either suggested or enforced. She can actually be somewhat more dictatorial and direct without weakening confidence. On the other hand, she can free herself from unduly persuasive or so-called suggestive methods — the very pitfall of weakness, and productive of mental and moral flabbiness and inertia — and still meet with an effective and reasonable co-operation on the part of the pupils.

While such command is rendered more possible, and is desirable and economical, for part of the time, a middle stage also easily differentiates itself in which the teacher, although she may propose the plans, gives the children the greatest freedom in suggesting modifications and in carrying them out in their own way. This is a custom which is gaining ground in all the best schools, but a true understanding of its possibilities is more quickly and more thoroughly attained by both teacher and pupils if work is differentiated so as to provide for authoritative planning on the children's part, as well as for work commanded without debate on the part of the teacher. Such a differentiation is logical and natural, and each part mutually supports the other.

A word further may be said about the introduction of self-organized work in a class. In calling for plans or schemes on the part of the children, the method of approach may readily vary with every class and with every teacher. The method of real approach to any child or group of children is indeed a whole science of itself. If the teacher should feel that the instructive plan of many of her children, if freely expressed, would be to get out of school at any cost, and as far away from the teacher as possible, or, failing that, to ignore her help or the help of each other in ambitious plans, and thus to relapse to mere idle play or what they could do just as well without the school as with it, it is plain that she is not in the best position to approach the children with any such proposition as I have described. How many of my pupils would remain with me if they were perfectly free to go, expresses an ideal which must find some root in the heart of anyone who would succeed in such an undertaking.

I have suggested some of the general ideas and some of the practices governing the more general aspects of this kind of work, and must now turn to more intimate details.

In all these experiences, although nothing was said about whether individuals or groups should offer plans, it was found that only rarely purely individual plans were submitted to the teacher. The resources as well as the responsibilities necessary not only to success, but to vivid planning, were better provided for in a group. The idea, however, which started the group, and

which was to be worked out, was, I think, always the possession at first of a single individual. A germ of this had been obtained, no doubt, by previous contact with the home, school, or other portions of the environment. The value of an idea does not depend upon its isolation from every previous influence. Its value is rather to be measured by the degree with which it sticks and lives spontaneously in the mind. There is, for example, no author more saturated with the influences of his time than is Shakespeare, who, nevertheless, succeeded in giving a personal stamp to a large part of what he absorbed and organized. It is not so much so-called originality, viewed in a narrow way, but rather the extent to which the individual or the group is willing to stake himself on the issue which is characteristic of self-organized work. To do this is to have a real originality of spirit. There is a feeling that they are effective and actually causing something worth while in the outside world. In this respect such work differs from play which does not come up against the real resistances of the outside world, and causes changes which are ineffectual except within the body or the imagination. Of course, in view of such a distinction, what is work at one stage of development becomes play at another.

Even when plans were at first apparently individual, they usually either were concealed or took on later some conscious social reference. I may illustrate this by a single case. A fifth-grade boy, rather belated in his development, wished to go with a number of others who were modeling in clay. He was not, however, connected with them in any organized plan. His idea of what he wanted to do was proportionately indefinite and at first looked forward to but half an hour. He seemed to care very little about what he was going to model, but mentioned a definite object, perhaps more to get an opportunity of handling the clay, than for any other reason. As he was working, I came up to him and asked him if I could assist him in any way. The fact that he had no particular problems in mind led to a rather indefinite answer. Now, it is plain that if a plan has not sufficient life in it to stand a struggle for existence with other plans that may come easily to mind, it is not sufficiently intense to be worth while. A

resolution that cannot stand a certain amount of temptation is not very well adapted for a hardy life, nor is it very likely to be well carried out. It is better that such weaknesses be discovered at an early stage, if possible. I accordingly set myself to see if I could not, using a moderate stimulus, tempt the boy to desert his plan. I think a cup or vase was the object he was modeling. I said: "What's the good of making a cup? You have plenty of them at home, haven't you?" and so on. I said this, of course, somewhat tentatively, so as not to suggest in the slightest any feeling of authority on my part. The boy at this stage was, I felt, too weak to resist a too powerful stimulus. He went on modeling without giving much of an answer. I then said: "Why don't you make a rest for a pen or something like that? You could make it just long enough to hold pens so that the ink wouldn't fall on the desk when you laid it down. You could put in a little cup for ink, too, make it like a fern leaf and have the stem wind round the little cup. Or you might, perhaps, make a frog looking into the little pool of ink;" and so on, giving a number of different scattered suggestions. One of these appealed to his imagination, and he said: "Yes, that would be better;" and he started to sketch out on the clay the new idea. (I may say here that we had a kiln in the school, and that these utensils could actually be burned and afterward painted and used.) The next day he was working quite vigorously at his pen-holder. When the teacher of the room, hearing the story of his change of plan, said: "That boy is so shilly-shally that if I would go and ask him to change to something else, I believe he would do it." I said to the teacher: "It would be good to try. If he is to develop the power to resist temptation at all, he must get just such experiences." She provided herself with a little china pin-holder, and showed it to him, thus presenting him with a sense-perception as against his mere image. She pointed out the advantages of the pin-holder as well as she could, including the ease of its manufacture. The boy was again quite taken with the new idea, but remained somewhat disturbed. He finally said: "Well, I would make the pin-holder if I hadn't said I was going to make the pen-holder." "Oh, Mr. Scott won't care," said the teacher. "No, I suppose he won't;

but I kind of thought I would make it and give it to him, so that he could use it on his desk." And he went on with the work he had in hand.

It is evident here that what enabled the boy to resist the second temptation was the self-elected social motive, in which he had chosen me as a member of his group. Unfortunately for me, the pen-holder never got finished. A checkerboard (I think it was) which he had started in the sloyd-room weighed on his mind, and the next day he proposed that he use this time which had been given for modeling to finish the checkerboard. He said that the holidays were near by, and that if he did not get some extra time the checkerboard would never be finished. The teacher permitted him to make the change.

I saw him next day, and said rather humorously to him: "You're a nice kind of a fellow, changing around all the time. Is that the sort of man you're going to be when you grow up? I suppose now you would change again for very little. Suppose I give you ten cents, would you go on with the pen-holder?" "No," he said, "I wouldn't." "How much, then, would you take?" "I wouldn't do it for less than the price of a pair of boots." As the little fellow came of a poor family and was sadly in need of boots, I could readily appreciate this measure of his present resolution. Further temptation was not offered, and the checkerboard was finished in time.

A course in temptation may be a new thing for the public school, but it is a necessary part of the power of finding oneself. It is but the negative side of character-building. After all, in the most spiritual sense of the words, everyone has his price. The tragedy of it is, as George Eliot says, that many sell their souls and fail to get the price.

One of the first groups formed in the third and fourth grades in the Colorado Normal School consisted of two boys. One of these spoke to the teacher, and told her that he wanted to make a haystacker. He explained how he wished to make it, and said that he had another boy to help him. The teacher gave him a piece of paper so that he could draw out his plans, which he did. The two boys finished the work in about six weeks, having at the

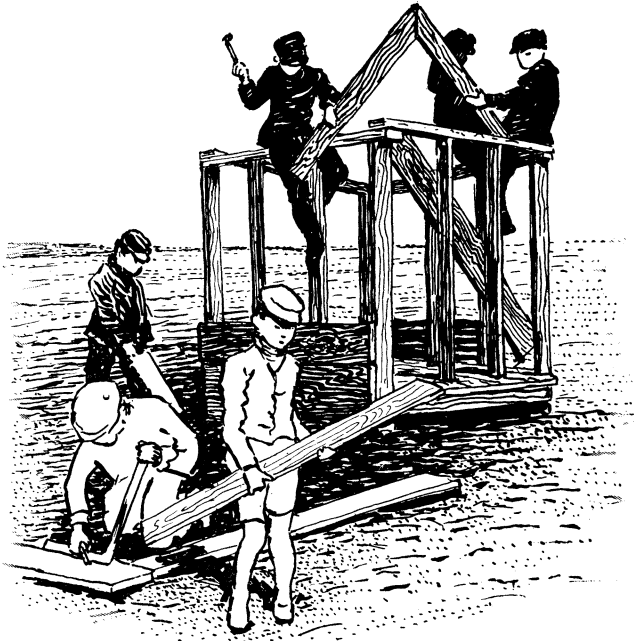
beginning of this period only one hour a week in which to work. There was during the work no hitch or uncertainty of procedure. The next important plan in the same grade was offered by a boy who wished to construct a two-room cottage. The plan of this was brought in at the beginning, and showed a full comprehension of what was needed. He had selected four or five boys to help him. The principle difficulty was one of cost. He estimated that the cottage would cost \$23. There was some talk of raising this money among the pupils, but a very small amount only was forthcoming. The idea from the beginning had been that the cottage could be used by all the members of the grade, as a playhouse or even for the purposes of some recitations. The group were asked to go over their calculations carefully and see if they could reduce the proportions of the house so as to make it less expensive. They changed it to a small one-room house with a shingled roof, a door, a large window, and a small window at the back. The cost of all the material was obtained from dealers. About \$10 was found to be the very lowest figure. At this point I obtained a grant of \$8 from the school, to be given to the grade on the condition that there would be nothing further given that year. This changed the actual conditions somewhat, and, since the whole grade was concerned, I described this offer to them, giving them to understand that the money could be used in other ways than the building of a house. Representatives of the building group spoke on the advantages of having a house, but others wished to buy a cabinet, and others wished to have an aquarium with gold-fish. I even went so far as to suggest that they could buy candy. They calculated the amount of candy that would come to each at my suggestion, but the proposal, although taken seriously, was not accepted, and indeed never gained any adherents. The building group proposed that if the house were built, other groups could be formed to make various things that would be needed to furnish it. Chairs, beds, and tables were necessary. The girls, they thought, might make curtains and bed-clothing. The house, too, ought to be papered, and a garden laid out. The small window ought to be provided

with a stained-glass design (done in paper). No decision, however, was reached that day. The day following further influence of the group had evidently been exercised, for all were unanimous in wishing to devote the money to the building of the house, and to supply what more money would be needed.

In the carrying out of this (see sketch) there were many difficulties to overcome, and many mistakes were made. The time estimated to complete the work was found to be altogether too short, so that work was stopped during part of the winter; but the house was finally finished, and stood resplendent in its thick coats of green and white paint. Meanwhile furniture and other furnishings had been made, the stained-glass window put in, and the garden laid out ready to be planted and irrigated. It was viewed with pride and affection. The faults in measurement of beams and laying of the shingles were pointed out by the pupils, but these defects, which were not at all apparent to an unskilled eye, did not prevent the satisfaction of everyone concerned.

Sometimes thoroughly self-organized work starts from work planned by the teacher. This is frequently so in the cases where groups are occupied in making and acting little dramas to be given before the class. In the fourth grade, e. g., the story of Damon and Pythias had been told by the teacher. A group was formed to write out the story in dramatic form, and to play it as well as write it. They decided to ask in other members of the fourth grade and teachers to witness the play. In the words of the teacher:

As this was Friday, and they had decided to give the play on Monday, they must get their invitations out at once. When the teacher entered the room (a small room adjoining the classroom), all were rushed with work, some writing invitations, others programs, and a few the drama. Groups had been formed within the group; division of labor was felt to be the most effective plan. . . . The committee requested the room for practice after school that evening. The parts were learned and very simple costumes were planned, each girl telling what she could bring or make. Only a few things were to be made; a crown for the king was one of these. On the following Monday the play was given at the regular hour for the literature lesson. The audience was requested to offer criticisms. These were kindly accepted, and the cast decided to improve upon the play and present it before the whole school at general exercises, if the permission of the principal of the school



BUILDING THE HOUSE



PLAY WITH THE DOLLS

could be obtained. One of the criticisms made was that when the wife of Pythias received the note containing the king's decree that her husband must be executed, she fainted; but the audience had no way of knowing the cause of her faint. The next time it was played she read the note aloud before fainting.

The same kind of work has recently been carried out in some of the Boston schools. Miss Shaw, of the Wells School, and Miss Clark, of the Charleston High School, have both succeeded well in this undertaking. The narrow limits of this article will prevent my giving more than a hint of this work. The conditions surrounding Miss Shaw's school are not the best for the development of initiative and resource. The school is situated in one of the most crowded quarters of the city, and the children (mostly foreigners) come from poor homes. The making and acting of plays has been one of the most favored activities, especially with the Russians, Jewish, and Polish children. This may be because material resources are limited, although a great deal is done in organizing even simple material for a play. A little ten-year-old author, who had written a play mainly about two dolls (see cut), said that one of these dolls was her own. There was a kind grandmother in this play. I asked her if she had a grandmother. She said "No," but that she would like to have one. This was one reason for putting her in the play. Some of the original tableaux made by the groups were excellent even from an adult standpoint. Many of the subjects were drawn from the history the children had been studying. Among these were "The Execution of Nathan Hale," "Waiting for the News of Washington's Army," "Soldiers' Farewell," etc. Others, such as "Tag," and "Blind Man's Buff," represented the imaginative quintessence of their usual games and other home and street activities.

On the basis of a freer and more participative conduct of the regular class in history, Miss Clark's high-school pupils organized three clubs. One of these is a camera club for the purpose of photographing scenes, statues in the Art Museum, etc., relating to the history. Another club produces drawings in the same way, while another calls itself "The Sidelights Club," because it hunts for and brings into the class information not discussed in the regular textbooks.

I have spoken of the differentiation of these classes of work in the schools. That part involving absolute command and implicit obedience is hardly necessary to touch upon, however valuable it is, especially as a training for times of strain. It is evident that war could not well be carried on without a training in such habits. The same may be said of other operations organized like those of war. This is not all, however. On the ground of economy of thought and time, absolute authority is advantageous as an element in most civilized affairs. There is a threshold of authority, marking off its favorable effects from its unfavorable. This is to be found in every case by experience. An illustration may be advanced in the case of the authoritative laws surrounding the medical profession. In certain states none but those having passed a certain standard are allowed to practice. The public is not left free to select anyone, but must choose within the limits laid down by law. The effect of this, however, is practically to increase the freedom of the public, by economizing time, especially at a period of strain. When life is at stake, one is not in a position to deliberate and choose the best physicians, nor would many take this precaution beforehand. The authoritative protection directly aids the individual in the line of his own deepest desires, and thus also gives him more energy and more time to pursue his liberty in other directions. The threshold here might be formalized by saying that, in as far as authority increases liberty, it is an undoubted good. The maxim, "Use authority only to prevent hindrances," if interpreted fairly and generously, would express the same idea from the imperative or motor side.

The midway stage, where the teacher, or society back of her, insists that certain definite things shall be done, but leaves the pupils free to carry these out in ways of their own invention, although used in the schools, is not yet extended to the limits of best effectiveness. When self-organized work is carried on, this midway stage is greatly benefited. The children are more ready to lay hold on details capable of cheerful effort and success. An example from a second-grade class will illustrate this feature. The subject undertaken by the teacher was nest-building; the

the time was in the spring. The teacher, a young man, had got up a plan based on the McMurray ideas, and arranged according to what he thought would be the law of apperception. He would ask questions about the children's experience. How many had seen birds nesting? Etc., etc. The application was to be a moral one, and would emphasize the evil of robbing birds' nests.

After some discussion, I got the teacher to join together a few of the Herbartian stages and proceed a little more naturally, while keeping in mind the children's great motor capacity; not attempting to plan the lesson exactly as it would come, but to have a number of possible ways in which it might run. The outcome of the lesson showed that the children proposed doing several unexpected things. The proposal to do something rather than to talk about something was the first step on the teacher's part. (As a matter of fact, actual doing is more thoroughly apperceptive than anything else, neglected as it has been by Herbartians and non-Herbartians alike.) The teacher said simply: "I've been watching some birds building their nests, and wondered whether any of you could make nests like theirs." As will be seen, this suggests a whole program. The children discussed it readily, but not lengthily. One said: "The birds have bills, which are better than hands; but if I had a needle and thread, I think I could do it." Many did not know, and asked the teacher if he would show them a nest so that they could tell how hard it would be to make. He did not have a nest of the kind he had been observing, but one in the class asked where this nest was, and, since it was near, proposed that they go out and see it. This was done immediately. (The class was only about twenty in number.) They got a stepladder and went up one by one, each to see how the nest was made and what it was made of. The teacher proposed that they do not tell what each had seen till all were through, but perhaps write it down. Many did this latter, while some started to look around to find where the birds had got their material. They found nearly all of it—dried grass, pieces of excelsior, etc. Each thought now that he could make a nest. The next day the teacher provided them with branching twigs, which he had stuck in their ink-wells, but the children

proposed to go outside and stick them in the ground. They also proposed to work two by two, but none of them paired off as boy and girl. The pairing was done simply for the sake of rapidity and other effectiveness. During this hour they all made birds' nests many of which were very successful, although the children pointed out discrepancies. Pictures of birds were provided, and books with descriptions. It is evident that such work gains both the knowledge and the moral sympathy aimed at in the first plan; but by following the children's proposals frankly where they seemed sensible, even although unexpected, a deeper and more permanent element had been liberated by the teacher.

A word in closing ought to be said as to the effect of such work as we have been advocating in strictly graded classes. We may say frankly that the tendency is to break up this rather mechanical and thoroughly authoritative institution. In the self-organized group the selective attractions of children themselves, apart from their formal knowledge, as well as their motor efficiency, lead to the strong and weak, from a scholastic standpoint, being often drawn together. When the work that is done under these conditions is successful, there is no reason why such associations should not be continued beyond the usual period of promotion, especially as the world that the children go out into is not rigidly graded, except in manufactories, where we are already beginning to regret it. Out of this there ought to come, not a grade as we now understand it, superficial and artificial as it is, but a natural grouping of children resulting from their combined attractions, mutual helpfulness, and the teachers' correcting judgment, which, it would be expected, would roughly follow an age measure, and would not ignore intellectual differences, but would much more thoroughly than at present reflect the growing development of heart and hand as well as head.

Such a natural institution or series of them would form a real school, and give the children an opportunity to find themselves in presence of each other, rather than too exclusively in the presence of the ghosts of even Euclid, Newton, Mommsen, Longfellow, or Shakespeare, especially as reflected in the single facet of the teacher's personality. The children would thus be able to grow

much more along their own lines, instead of always imitating the past, or the narrower present which reflects it. For them there would come to be a present, not gray with much mere learning, but joyful with futures about to be realized. In such a spirit the part itself is better understood; and, as one pine-tree imitates another, not by looking at it, but by obedience to the law of its own growth, so we may expect a future generation comparable in some degree to the heroes who have made our world and our country what it is.